



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 30TH OCTOBER 2012 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Davies - Chairman
Councillor Mrs. E.M. Aldworth - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

J. Bevan, Mrs. A. Blackman, C.J. Cuss, R.T. Davies, Mrs. E. Forehead, R.W. Gough, A.G. Higgs, Ms. J.G. Jones, M.J. Prew

Cabinet Member: Councillor D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services)

Also in attendance to observe: Councillors C. Durham, Mrs C. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Human Resources, Governance and Business Manager), C. Hawker, K. James (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), C.P. Mann

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), M. Headington (Principal Officer: Outdoor Facilities and Bereavement Services), D. Phenis (Sport and Leisure Services Manager), R. Tanner (Strategic Planning and Urban Renewal Manager), M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), R.J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N. Dix, C. Elsbury, S. Kent, Mrs. D. Price

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 18th September 2012 (minute nos. 1 - 14, on page nos. 1 - 6) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There were no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

4. CABINET REPORTS

The Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had not been requested to be brought forward for review at the meeting.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

Councillor D.V. Poole, Community and Leisure Services, gave a verbal report to Members and made reference to the successful partnership with the Youth Forum and related initiatives regarding dog fouling and littering. He also confirmed that the memorandum of understanding with Gwent Police was signed last week and Police Community Support Officers are now authorised to issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering on our behalf.

Members were advised that the Authority's Waste Strategy and Operations Service has come runner up in the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee Awards in the most improved recycling rates category; while discussions were ongoing with Assembly Members, the Minister and the WLGA with a view to protecting the dry recyclables collection method employed by the Authority. Also, later this month, CCBC will be hosting the second Pride in Your Place awards.

In closing the Cabinet Member referred to the potential reduction in future funding arrangements relating to the Community Safety Partnership and Safer Communities Fund.

Members welcomed the Cabinet Member's presentation and a brief discussion followed.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

6. GRAVE PERSONALISATION

The Chairman acknowledged members of the public who were present for this agenda item.

As requested by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 17th July 2012, the report gave Members the results of further consultation exercises with members of the public. Members were reminded of the initial Task and Finish Group's considerations and ultimately Cabinet's unanimous endorsement of their recommendations.

Further to the Scrutiny Committee's comments on 17th July, a series of public meetings were held and officers also met with the MP, AM and relevant elected members on the 30th March. Subsequently, officers met with the public on an individual basis on 20th April to work towards a resolution. A further consultation meeting with the public took place on the 20th September along with the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, and appropriate officers. The outcome of these meetings were highlighted.

Members discussed the report and some questioned whether it would be possible to make allowances to certain individuals. Officers responded to general questions and highlighted the need for one overarching Policy for the whole county borough. The existing Policy had been introduced following eighteen months of review with all considerations being taken into account.

The Scrutiny Committee, by a show of hands, recommended that the Council's existing Lawn Cemetery Policy remain unchanged.

7. INVESTMENTS IN LEISURE FACILITIES

The report advised Members of a number of investments that are planned to the Authority's leisure facilities during the current year.

Members were asked to note that a recent Cabinet report entitled "Chief Medical Officer for Wales Annual Report 2011" indicated above average levels of obesity and inactivity within the county borough. In addition, customers' demands on the leisure industry was changing and CCBC's provision of facilities, services and initiatives needed to evolve accordingly.

To meet this challenge, individual Leisure Managers have promoted investment opportunities in facilities across the county borough. Structural alterations to two of the Authority's Leisure Centres are also planned.

Members welcomed the report and a general discussion followed. Some concerns were raised regarding the equality of leisure services provision offered across the county borough. Officers responded to questions and confirmed that due to financial constraints, it was not possible to have a leisure service in each ward.

A Member sought a further report on the possibility of varying tennis courts charges payable by youths in the Summer months to encourage increased use. Officers were also asked to detail monies received by the Authority for the use of the tennis courts.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report.

8. BARGOED STREET MARKET

The report informed Members of a request that originated from a group of retailers in Bargoed, who wanted to re-establish a weekly street market in the town. M&B Markets, a market operator from West Wales, has expressed an interest in operating the market and a suitable location has been found within St Gwladys car park. A six-month trial period has been suggested and this proposal was presented and discussed at the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group on 8th March 2012. The idea received unanimous support.

Members welcomed the proposals to reintroduce a street market, but sought clarification as to the safety and suitability of the proposed location. Officers confirmed that as a result of the ongoing developments in Bargoed, the car park was the current preferred choice. The site was manageable due to its self-contained nature and nearby traffic calming measures. Upon completion of the trial, consideration would be given to moving the street market to The Square, as ground works would have been completed at that time.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the report and that a six-month licence will be offered to M&B Markets to operate a market at St Gwladys Gardens car park, Bargoed, at a rental sufficient to cover the Council's costs. The Committee also noted that following the trial period, the market will be reviewed and either be terminated or put out to tender.

9. FEEDBACK FROM SITE VISITS TO VIRIDOR AND VEOLIA ENERGY FROM WASTE PLANTS BY PROSIECT GWYRDD JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL

The Democratic Services Manager presented DVDs from Viridor Waste Management and Veolia Environmental Services, following recent visits by the Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Scrutiny Panel to their Energy from Waste Plants in Slough and Newhaven, respectively.

The DVDs demonstrated the type of services available at each plant together with the accompanying processes, the stringent environmental controls that were in place and the impact of each plant to the surrounding area.

Members discussed the content of the DVDs and commented favourably on the lack of emanating noise and/or smells. Officers confirmed that members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee had undertaken a review of health and environmental concerns associated with energy from waste incineration and a copy of the accompanying report was available, at Members' request. In summary, the report concluded that the Energy from Waste Plants were a clean way to deal with residual waste.

Prosiect Gwyrdd's two remaining tenders, the type of waste they were to take (black bag residual waste) and the bidding process was clarified. The Head of Community and Leisure Services advised that the preferred bidder would be announced to all five local authorities during the same week in February 2013, and it was suggested that the Scrutiny Committee visit the preferred bidder's Energy from Waste Plant after this date.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the DVDs and welcomed the proposed visit.

10. REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

Councillors R. Gough and Mrs A. Blackman referred to the Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme and asked that reports be brought forward at the earliest opportunity and that timescales be given to all outstanding reports.

The Chief Executive informed Councillor Gough that the report relating to the Plaza Café, Blackwood, which he had requested, came under the remit of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted without discussion:

- (1) Planned Maintenance of Gullies;
- (2) External Funding for Waste and Environmental Improvement Schemes;
- (3) Budget Monitoring and Trading Account Report 2012/2013;
- (4) Summary of Members' Attendance - Quarter 2 - 1st July 2012 to 30th September 2012;
- (5) Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme;
- (6) Minutes of the Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Scrutiny Panel held on 13th July 2012;
- (7) Minutes of the Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Committee Meeting held on 17th September 2012;
- (8) Minutes of the Voluntary Sector Sub-Committee Meeting held on 19th September 2012;
- (9) Minutes of the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group Meeting held on 3rd October 2012.

The meeting closed at 6.25 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2012, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN